

□ **Share Information**

To promote knowledge dissemination, the Tennessee Department of Health proposes to:

- Exchange health information electronically via select telecommunications initiatives across the state
- Promote community health information networks (CHINs) and expansion into systems which link all partners, especially at the community level.

□ **Provide Health Information and Technology**

- Maximize the use of technology to eliminate geographic and bureaucratic barriers to communication and information exchange.
- Promote multipurpose networked data systems such as the Tennessee Health and Medical Information Exchange System (THAMES), Information Network for Public Health Officials (INPHO), and IBM's Health Data Network (HDN).
- Develop community access systems including the Internet, wide area network, and Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES: WHERE DOES TENNESSEE GO FROM HERE?

- A cornerstone TDH improvement strategy is the implementation of a community diagnosis process. This involves health assessment, policy development, and quality assurance which are founded on information-based decision-making, collaboration, and accountability.

- The mission of the community diagnosis process is to develop a community-

based, community-owned, health services assessment and planning process to implement improvement strategies.

- The process involves 6 stages:

- Initial design or start-up
- Data gathering
- Data analysis
- Problem identification and prioritization
- Intervention development
- Community diagnosis plan.

- 95 county health councils are being established statewide to carry out assessment functions, reflecting TDH's commitment to decentralization of planning and community-based problem-solving.

- Efforts are underway to:

- apply quality of care considerations to health issues and build consensus on how quality of care can and should be measured;
- examine the impact of MCOs on quality of care issues, especially at the community level;
- develop innovative, inclusive, and sustainable partnerships across state and local levels; and
- plan for optimal utilization of shared data and interactive communications technologies.

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